

## arts & entertainment

# Creative group varies from acid-rock to Disney tunes

By Kent Warneke

"We're creative people, we're not just musicians."

Such is the philosophy behind the newest musical entry in Lincoln, A.K.A., whose first performance at the Zoo Bar treated the audience to a musical concoction unique in sound and visual image.

The name A.K.A., which represents *also known as*, has an unusual origin.

"We couldn't come up with a name for the group that everybody was satisfied with, so we named ourselves A.K.A. which lets us be a lot of different names," according to Saint Teresa, drummer for the group.

And with such freedom of naming, A.K.A. has come up with some other possible identities, such as abdominal kaleidoscopic abyss, abnormal kindred admintion and adulterers kant advertise.

Formally a group since mid-September, A.K.A.'s members include Buzz Klik, lead vocalist and live electronics; Mike Swing, guitar, bass and vocals; Graveyard James, bass, guitar and vocals; Saltine, movement and vocals; Tiajuana, visuals; and Saint Teresa.

If some of the things that A.K.A.'s members do seem extraordinary to the regular rock group, it's because A.K.A. is not your ordinary group.

Out of Fever Blister, a punk rock group, Surrealestate, an avant-garde type of group, and the Midwest Ramblers, a country-western group, have come the members of A.K.A., and with it a wide range of talent.

"First of all, we are a rock group," Klik said. "But no one is stuck with just that. We've got such a wide background of musical styles that we can do anything."

"We're very individualistic," Klik said. "If someone comes to us and has something that is creative and we don't already have it, we'll put it in the group."

"And when we do this, it'll either bomb

or we'll have a very unique sound to us."

Tiajuana said, "It's possible that we could start using movies and video tape in the future. We try to make it a sensory experience."

One of the different aspects of A.K.A.'s performances are the talents of Saltine.

"We try and present body language in our performances and Saltine enables us to have some high art in our act with her modern ballet dancing along with our music," Klik said.

Swift said, "A.K.A. is part of a new wave."

"Our music can be as pretty as the Beatles or as hard as any acid rock group."

Klik said, "We play all kinds of tunes, some heavy, some light, some really spaced-out music and some straight Top 40 hits. We even have some G-rated Walt Disney songs that are just plain silly."

A.K.A. has no definite future plans besides two upcoming dates Thursday night at Jesse's Bar and a New Year's Eve benefit also at Jesse's.

Swift said for now the group would be satisfied playing in Lincoln five nights a month, but would eventually like to cut a record.

James said, "I think it's refreshing that some group like ours is emerging in Lincoln. We enjoy ourselves and we're not satisfied with mediocrity."

"In the future, the world's music could come down to regional electric minstrel type of things, where quality would be available for a low price and no one is worried about making enormous amounts of money, just glad to be able to pay the bills and feed the kids."

But for right now, A.K.A. is satisfied with doing things that the normal rock band isn't usually associated with.

"We're not at all afraid to show emotion," Klik said. "If we're playing a song that is down and depressing, then certain people in the group will show that to the audience."

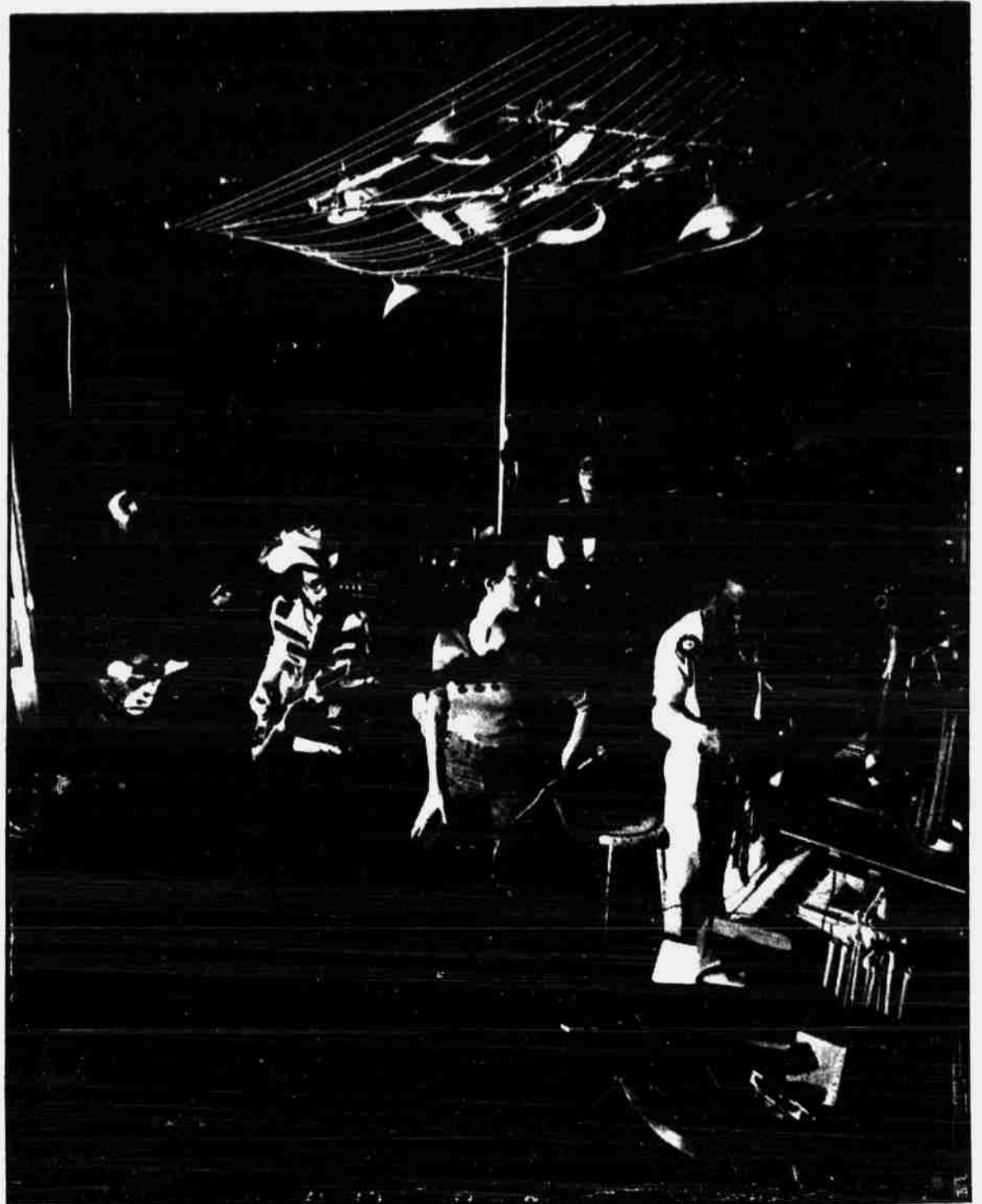


Photo by Mark Billingsley

Lincoln's new rock group A.K.A. offers listeners a variety of light and heavy music and some songs that are "just plain silly."

# Mere appliance can demand attention, dull creativity

By Pete Mason

The television, when it first appeared in American living rooms, was little more than an appliance, like the vacuum cleaner or garbage disposal.

It sat in a corner, gathering dust, and occasionally was watched. There simply wasn't much there when the screen lit up. The television was turned on for an hour or two in the evening. The rest of the time it sat amidst the rest of the furniture, its blank screen gray and glowering.

## TV review

In the early days there was a tendency to let the television watch you, rather than you watching the set. The screen of the early sets was small and when lit up, it stared out of the darkness as viewers gathered around it. We hadn't yet learned how to watch it.

Perhaps "watch it" is too vague a term; of course we watched it, but not like we watch it today.

### Creativity dries up

We look deeply into it now, with a concentration once reserved for higher forms of passive involvement, such as reading. But reading was work. It was invigorating. It tickled the senses and exercised the muscles of our imaginations.

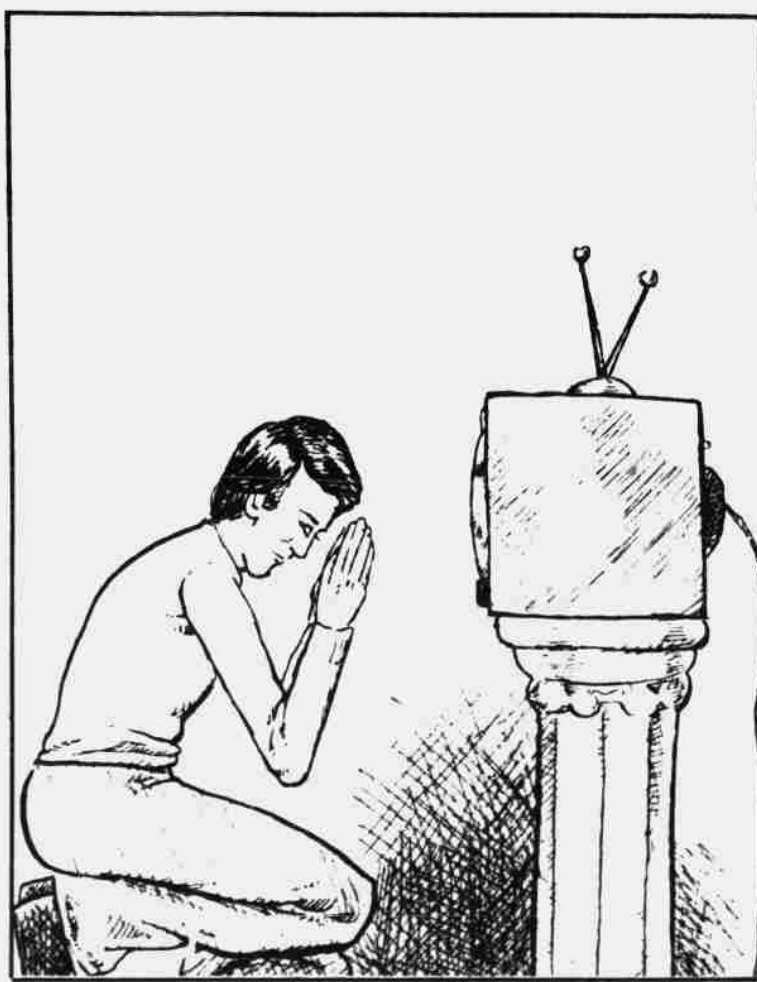
Once we learned how to watch the television set, some of our intellectual muscles became flabby. Our creative juices, which flowed enthusiastically when we pictured in our mind's eye the person, or place or period in time our author was writing about, began to dry up. The only muscles which became hardened were the big ones we sat upon night after night.

Somewhere along the way we stopped turning on the television set; it began to turn us on. As we began to develop television-viewing habits, the television began to take a more active role in our lives.

### Movies inspired awe

Television was conceived as an extension of radio and the movies. Alone, these media were stimulating. Radio had no pictures. Actions, places, times were all narrated. The listener filled in the blanks. Movies were larger than life. Their size when projected on the screen inspired peculiar awe. Movie-going was a weekly family experience.

Radio peaked in the 30s and 40s. The medium of radio never became an art medium. Its potential for art was



never really there. Movies have reached a stage where they can, in many instances, become art. (Movies, when they approach an artistic level, are called films, which shows that movies have indeed become art because art often breeds pretentiousness.)

Television changed the courses of both movies and radio. It was both and neither...right in our own living rooms. Only the most pretentious would consider that television is becoming art.

### Part of the family

Consider the family television set (or sets) today. It is usually a big, color console of gleaming mahogany, set in a highly visible area of the room in which the family most often congregates. It is polished and waxed, dusted and cleaned. Its little brothers, if there are some, are scattered in other areas of the house, usually for individual viewing.

It sits there, quietly, not bothering anyone, right? Wrong. When that set is turned off, it is just as real and functional as when it is turned on. It seems to sit im-

patiently. It is no good to anyone when its screen is dark. A dark television screen is an angry, frowning thing, which silently chastises those who glance at it for letting it sleep for so long.

A turned-off television set is a jab in the ribs, a burr under the saddle, a pouting reminder that we're missing something by keeping it off. A switched-off television set is a spoiled brat, holding his breath until he turns blue and gets his way. This is what television has become since its inception; a living, sometimes scolding, sometimes delighting, entity.

### No only child

There is no longer such a thing as an only child. Every home has a television set. It has become the family dog minus the daily walk to the backyard and the weekly food bill. It is the family baby minus the diaper change. It's the widow's dead husband and the ugly man's girlfriend. It's the only child's brother or sister.

This would seem dangerous enough but television has become something more sinister. It has become a "looking glass" of the *Alice in Wonderland* variety. One has only to step through and reality is distorted. On the other side, we become privy to someone else's perception of reality. Unable to control our destinies in the world, amazingly enough, we choose someone else's world where we have no control whatsoever.

This "other world" has been described as a "vast wasteland" or as an opiate, a crystal ball or a magic carpet. Actually it is all and none of the above. It is something different for every person who uses it, whatever his or her motives.

### Tube abuse

What it *isn't* is real. If we forget that, we're in very big trouble. There are those in the television industry who would have us believe that it is. Their motives are so vague that it would not hurt us to be cautious of them. The potential for abuse in television is greater than in any other medium in man's history. And considering the addictive quality of television and the number of people who are hooked, no amount of vigilance is too much.

The next time you see a blank television, consider for a moment who's making the decision to turn it on—you or the television. It would seem to follow that if we refused to be led by things, we could force the people behind the things to take a closer look at their audience, its potential for anger and its power to change the course of the medium in a totally new direction. What a tragedy it would be if one day we stepped into that other world and found we couldn't get out. And what a greater tragedy it would be if we didn't want to.